

Connections and Circulation Plan

Relationship to the Arterial Road Task Force (ARTF) Future Roads Network Plan

The Southwest Area Master Plan does not alter the adopted ARTF Future Roads Plan. That planning process represented an extensive public participation process at many levels and took place over several years. Since this master plan addresses primarily land use and design, it was decided early in the process that any attempt to modify the ARTF plan would be inappropriate.

Staff has been directed, however, by the City Council to explore and make recommendations on connections and circulation patterns based on the proposed land uses and urban forms. In addition, the *Final Report* provides some basic road patterns and guidelines for future development. Principle 2 of the *Final Report* also states that neighborhoods should be connected within and among themselves. *Based on these criteria, the city planning, development review and transportation/traffic teams have collectively produced a suggested plan for local street, sub-collector, and collector level roads based on the future land patterns (Exhibit 4.2).* This plan would be supplemental to the road network standards contained within the design guidelines for future development. As the connections and circulation plan illustrates, the proposed systems are intended to work in consort with the adopted ARTF plan¹.

Methodology for Plan Development

In development of these road systems, many of the basic assumptions, and limitations, that emerged from the ARTF Plan were carried over². Comments regarding future connections from the neighborhood workshops were also respected. In essence, the approach that staff took in developing the plan was to assemble those individual roads or connections that had been approved or recommended through the development process as well as look at minor neighborhood connections that could be facilitated by future development.

What staff also considered was avoiding patterns that would facilitate future “cut-through” traffic. There was also a concerted effort to avoid additional connections to Agua Fria Road, but where those connections were necessary, try and disperse traffic to existing secondary or minor arterials or collectors³. No additional future roads were indicated through or within the Agua Fria THC proper, nor were there any additional river crossings included. Many of the suggested collectors or local streets shown connect to the expanded road network as shown in the ARTF plan.

¹ The original growth projections that were used during the ARTF Future Roads project were fairly similar to the projected growth resulting from this process. It is therefore assumed that the ARTF assumptions remain valid.

² This includes such issues as a discontinuity of Caja del Rio at the river, no further connections to Powerline Drive and a continued lack of connectivity along Richards Ave.

³ Alternative connections such as Rufina St., San Felipe and Constellation Drives.

Staff has also provided alternative connections that may prove more appropriate, depending on how and when development actually occurs. The circulation patterns are intended to demonstrate conceptually where future roads would most likely be needed as a result of future development. It does not indicate or portray the actual physical alignments or traffic loads or capacities. That level of detail would have to be determined at the time of development. *As stated in several of the neighborhood plans, the level of development intensity would be directly proportional to the connections proposed, the road capacity of the existing networks or some combination thereof.* This would have to be demonstrated as each development project is considered. That would include the appropriate road system (i.e., collector versus sub-collector) as well as actual alignments, however, no roads with capacities greater than a collector level should be considered if it is not called for in the ARTF plan. Future traffic signalization is also included as a matter of reference.

Finally, the connection and circulation plan indicates where the major urban trail spines should be located in order to create a viable pedestrian and equestrian network. This would include the River Trail⁴, the Arroyo de los Chamisos Trail, a trail along Rufina Street that would continue through the drainage easements located between Country Club MHP and Fairway Village and tie into the River Trail near San Felipe Road. An added future pedestrian trail has been included that would tie the Tierra Contenta trail system to those neighborhoods and schools south of Airport Road. A secondary "loop" trail is also indicated along the proposed South Meadows arterial that will provide the critical north/south connection between the River and Rufina trails.

Other than those public or private efforts that are currently underway to acquire trail easements and/or build trails, future trails and minor trail connections (and their easements) should be required as part of the development process. This will encourage the smaller, but essential, neighborhood connections.

⁴ The main trunk of the River Trail would be located within the 200 foot public access easement on the north side of the River, with a secondary trail located through the State Land Office on the south side of the river. This will allow the trail to continue past the NM599 bridge on either the north or south bank. Further river trail access is being determined as part of the Airport Road Development District Plan.